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IMPORTANT FROM HAVANA

SAILING OF THE EXPEDITION TO MEXICO

THE SLIDELL AND MASON QUESTION

PINIONS OF THE CUBAN PRESS.

Our Havana Correspondence. Havana, Nov. 30, 1861.

More About Mason and Stidell-Island-Prosperity of Porto Rico

rae Opera, ac., dc., ecdition to Mexiso is an event in history—the beyond a doubt, of a memorable page, the story se written upon which may be of no small mo-The reasons given for thus invading, rightfully on. Therefore the design indicated, if cant, is simply absurd. To establish perand that is the real idea-in a oppulation on the other, would require a despot-genough to resist the upheavings of a restless sive people, whose normal condition, since they and to establish such the governing power ounts to subjugation, which must be main can be gathered. The subjugating power the body corporate. Government is an Yet, when Spain shall have the entire country in her grasp, and when she shall have erected the complicated and difficult machinery of government, she is expected to

In the meantime, for the present, we will say, Mexican history will form a part of that of Spain, and the opening of the new chapter was written by the frst division of the sisted of seven transports, carrying troops and one, and convoyed by four war steamers. On and Tuesday the second and third divisions will leave. I will endeavor, as soon as possible, to obtain details of the entire expedition. The ne Isabel II., 86; sailing frigate Cortes, 42, and the screw schoolers, carrying two or three guns, belonged to the squadron of instruction, will nt to Mexico, and that the third and fourth of marines are preparing to come to Havans will soon swarm with a more formidable fiest perhaps ever been seen in that part of the world. frigate Foudre is now at Vera Cruz, and any what I have been assured in regard to the Spanish composing the land force of the expedition, nameevery man of the 6,000 has had the yellow fever, and in therefore proof against the deadly clim Merra calicule of Mexico.

ists, I find it stated that the government of Chile, in reply some questions relating to the incorporation of St. Domingo, had justified the proceedings of Spain in that mat-ter, and rejected the idea that there was ground to apprethe latter indulged any designs of conquest in hide what I have to say of Mexican affairs

ter dated from Merida, the 7th inst., which de lution against the State government keeps the field, and the port of Sisal continued to be blockaded. A warlike Merida declared, a short while since, that if the would find graves beneath the walls of that city if they With a petty revolution they cannot suppress selves not very well posted in the business of bury

affair has not yet subsided. I send you cranels ions of two editorials of the Diario de la Marina, which I bluk may prove interesting as an exposition of Spanish sentiment on the question. Some facts have come to my ning. It appears that the Spanish steamer for Cadiz delayed her departure some two hours or more in Europe, and had staterooms very handsomely expectation of taking the Southern ministers to atted up for their accommodation. The Trent was not a whit behind the Spaniard in this latter item, I told. The staterooms occupied by the party were bute to that end, and the ministers and suites were taken the same luxurious materials. A well known Cuban gentie adherent of the United States government, has assur ed me that he knew of the intended capture three or four days before it occurred. In that case it is conclusive that the plan originated in Havana.

We had an arrival from New Orleans three or four day ce—the schooner Break o'Day, Captain Martin, in five days. She left on the 20th, and came into our harbo brought was in the shape of a despatch to the captain dated at Memphis or Nashville, I think, the 19th, stating that a battle had been fought near Springfield, Bissouri

While in our once happy land our friends and relative are fighting about a matter which hinges more or less on slavery, it is interesting to know that within the presur cargo of 625 live Africans was landed at Manya milla, a point on the southeast coast of this island story goes, that the Governor of the district a bribe of \$25,000 to permit them to It is said that several other are preparing and some actually on their way. It strikes one as very singular that, not with standing the sincere op-position of our present Captain General to the trame, it should be continued in open deflance of his will and authority, and contrary to the established laws of the

eister Antille, Porto Rice, it is evident that she is pros-pering very considerably. From January 1 to October 34 the present year, compared with the same period of the years 1859 and 1860, the increase in sugar, come and pacco, is remarkably large—that in sugar being 51. 263,782 lbs., coffee 984,319 lbs., and tobacco 6,569,376 lbs., over 1859; and over last year, sugar 18,751,067 lbs., cof-fee 935,438 lbs., and tobacco 7,050,024 lbs. When they get their railroads built there, Porto Rico will be able to hold her head somewhat higher, and I hope the government will assist her on the road to prosperity.

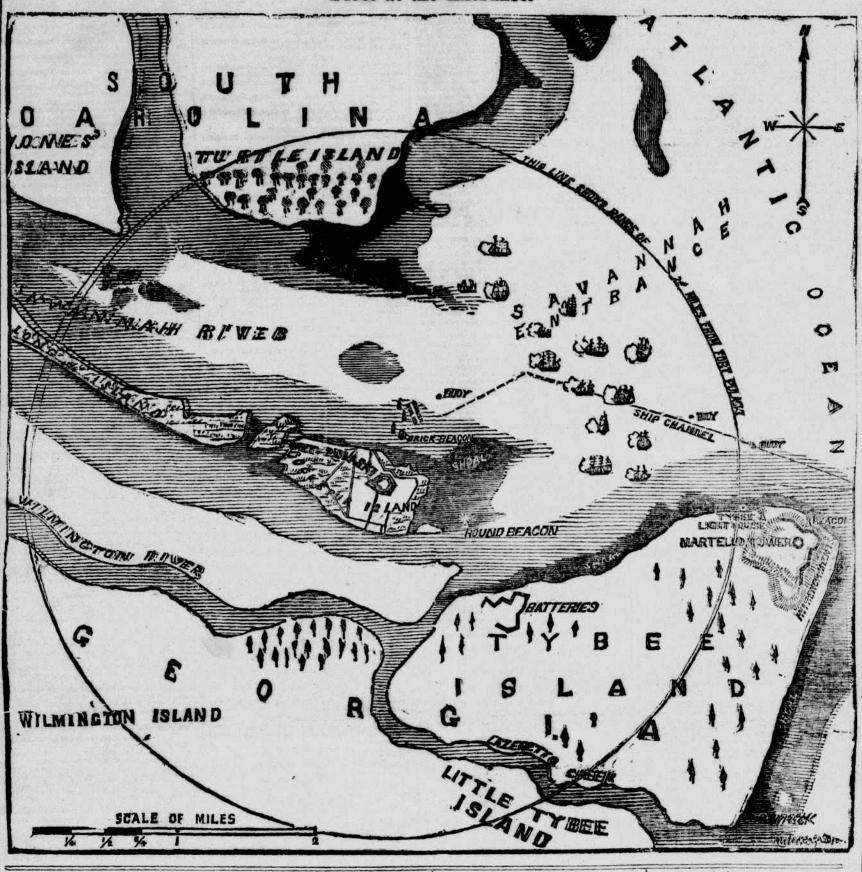
Local news here is, as usual, very unimportant. Every few days we have a grand ball, where the gay and beautiful of Havana assemble. The ball given a few nights ago by the Count de Santovenia is said by these who had the pleasure of being present to have been a most magni-scent affair. Not having had that pleasure myself, I

cannot speak of it more fully.

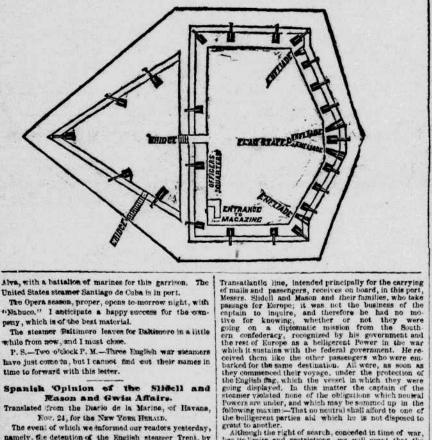
The French war steamer Milan, Captain Clone, arrived here yesterday, and also the Spanish war steamer General

KEY TO SAVANNAH RIVER.

Position of Fort Pulaski---The Range of Guns---Necessity of Taking the Fort---The Union Fleet at the Entrance.



THE UPPER TIER OF GUNS IN FORT PULASKI.



Alva, with a battalion of marines for this garrison. The United States steamer Santiago de Cuba is in port. "Nabuco." I auticipate a happy success for the com-

The steamer Baltimore leaves for Baltimore in a little while from now, and I must close.

P. S.—Two o'clock P. M.—Three English war steamers have just come to, but I cannot find out their names in time to forward with this letter.

Spanish Opinion of the Slidell and Enson and Gwin Affairs.

Translated from the Diario de la Marine, of Havans,

The even; of which we informed our readers yesterday namely, the detention of the English steamer Trent, by the American corvette of war San Jacinto, and the for cible sekure of Messes. Mason and Slidell, who were among the passengers for Europe, has preduced a great

following maxim:—That no neutral shall afford to one of the beligerent parties aid which he is not disposed to grant to another.

Aithough the right of search, conceded in time of war, lass its limits and restrictions, we will grant that the converte San Jacinto, a federal government cruster in these waters, could stop and oven examine the steamer Trent, but with all the conditions and circumspection which this delicate question requires—in the place where it was done—which must be considered neutral water. And we say this latter with the fullest design, besing the assertion upon the following:—The San Juento descrict the Trent five miles to the North of Coma Key; but from that time till she overtook the latter there must have empsed an hour and a half, supposing that she was going at the rate of ten miles an hour. Both vessels, term, must have met about the meridian of Faredon Ney and Guinchroe; that is to say, in the antrowest part of the cruiter San Jacinto—and let us suppose that it was used with the present moderation needful, a matter which may at least be doubted, if what happened to a French vessel, an account of which we have received, be taken into account (')—was it by any means lawful to demand, with a threat of employing force, the surrender of the passengers, Shiel and Mason? To prove that it was not, we will report to an authority beyond auspicion smough americans. Vessels, asys Mr. James Kent, page 115, volume 1, of the Commentaries on the Law of the United States, are excessifiered by a fection of have as part of the passengers, Shiel and Mason? To prove that it was not, we will report to an authority beyond auspicion smough americans. Vessels, asys Mr. James Kent, page 115, volume 1, of the Commentaries on the Law of the United States, are excessifiered by a fection of have as part of the passengers, Shiel and Mason? To prove that it was not, we will report to an authority beyond auspicion among Americans. Vessels, asys Mr. James Kent, page 115, when had been the provention of the passengers,

ship Anna was taken by an English cruiser at the mouth of the Mississippi, within the jurisdiction of the United States, and Great Britain was obliged to deliver up the

of the Mississippi, within the jurisdiction of the United States, and Great Britain was obliged to deliver up the prize. We should never finish were we to refer to all the facts which not only justify, but convert, so to speak, into an anxiom of international law the inviolability of the principle of neutrality we have asserted.

Now, then, if the steamer Trent must be considered on neutral waters, as English territory, not only the individuals on board, but the poperty of the belligerent Powers, should be scrupplously respected by the other, in conformity with the doctrine laid down in the very book which is held in the highest estimation by the juriscensults and statesmen of the federal Union. By what right could the commander of the Son Janito demand the surrender of the two passengers who were on board the Trent? Assuredly he would have none, even though Mersrs. Slidell and Mason belonged to the active forces of the Southern confederacy, and even though they should have been made prisoners in that territory and by the armed force of their enemies. As soon as they could have got on board and were excered by the flag of a neutral power, they would have acquired the right that they should be respected, under penalty of vicining the principle of neutrality. With how much more reason in the present case, which concerns only two gentlemen, whose mission and place of procedure were not necessary to be known to the captain of a vessel in which they were travelling like so many other passengers.

only two gentlemen, whose mission and place of procedure were not necessary to be known to the captain of a vere real in which they were travelling like so many other passengers.

But, not only was their surrender domanded and violence threatened to obtain it, but a display of force was made by sending armed men on board the English steamer, and obliging Messus. Sidedl and Mason to surrender thenseives, in order to save their fellow passengers from a most serious conflict. If the captain of the Zenthal had the energy of which the sailors of England and other nations have given such notable extemples, the world would have been with horror, a neutral ceased sunk or captured for having sustained the principle of neutrality so manifestly violated. And who would have been the author of such a deed? The commander of a vessel-of-war of a nation more jealors than any of the observance of that principle, and which not long since rent the heavens with its cries and demanded satisfaction and indomnification from us, qualifying as an outrage what was no more than a rightful defence of our coasts against the piratical expectitions proceeding from her very ports. That is precisely her case if she should outrage the British people, should her government not hasten, as we hope it may, to solemnly disapprove the conduct of the San Jacinto, by reatoring to English territory the individuals in question and giving to the British flag the satesfaction which is due.

In taking upon ourselves the defence in this case, we do not do so without a motive. In the violation of the principle of neutrality with a friendly lower, the rights of all neutrals are violated, and we have an interest, as one of them, that it should be recognized and reparted as indicated. Messus, Sideli and Mason might just as well have taken passage in one of our passenger steamers. This affair may be even repeated hereafter, in the violation of the rights which it grants reproved and praineds, let the victim of the violation be whatsoever lower it may.

We will co

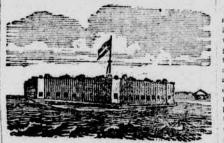
[From the Piario de la Marina, of Havana, Nov. 25.] We are going to speak once more about the affair of the Trent: the questions which it involves are so grave, complicated and transcendent that we must do all that our

plicated and transcendent that we must do all that our limited capacity and scanty knowledge permit to threw light apen them.

There were formerly two schools, so to speak, of international law, on the greater or lesser amplitude of the principle of neutrality. The partisans were exclusively, on the one side, the government and writers of Great Return, sho, jealous of her supermacy on the sen, established the old and restrictive rate known by the same of "Consider of the sea." On the other hand, the rate of the European nations, led by enlightened krance, sustained the exposite expensive and there also whose formula was, "the lag covers the merchandse."

Under this maxim of simple application—since it is only mecossary to recognize a flag in order to determine it what is under it be or be not hable to confication and capture, deciding affirmatively if it be that of an enemy

VIEW OF THE FORT FROM SEA.



and negatively if neutral—commerce is favored and the dreadful evils produced by war reduced within the narrowest bounds.

It began to be put in gractice in the early part of the eighteenth century. Subsequent in the treaty of Utrecht, in 7113, it became more generally incorporated in conventional law: it was officially proclaimed by Prussia in 1753, and finally prevailed among all nations, except England, from the French erdinance of July 26, 1778, and the Russian declaration of 1750. The Americans at that time gave a still greater extension to that maxim; their Commissioners at the Court of France—Benjamin Franklis, Shas lean and Arthur Lee—in their circular of 1777, instricted the commanders of armed vessels to apply it, without distinction, to all the prices they might make within sight of neutral coasts. See note 3, page 123, vol. 1 of Kent's Commissioners, abandoning her ancient pretension, which till then she had hed to with such tenacity, gave her adhesion to that principle in the treaty of pence, at Paris, in 1856, to which is annuxed the declaration of 1854, containing, among others, the following words:—"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to preserve the commerce of neutral nations from all unnecessary annoyance, abandons herewith a part of the rights which belong to belligerents by the law of nations;" adding that "properly of enemies which may be on board merchant vessels will be respected, unless contraband of war."

It is true that the United States receted a part of this treaty, but only that part which proposed the abelition of privateering. If the principal Powers of Europe, said the President, in his Message to Congress of December 4, 1854, had agreed to propose, as a rule of international law, the declaration that private property on the ocean was secure from capture, whether by vessels-of-war or privateerings. If the principal Powers of Europe, said the President, in his Message to Congress of December 4, 1854, had agreed to propose, as a rule of inter

lower at war are exempt from capture or confiscation when found on board neatral vessels, except articles contraband or war."

Well, then, it is already a maxim of international law, recognized by all civilized nations, including England, which had before rejected it, that the flag covers the marchandise, it is clear that persons, being more worthy of consideration and respect than things, should be, with so much the greater reason, aided and protected by neutral flags. The forcible seizure of two of the passengers, who, with their families, were traveling in the fremt, must be, theyfore, considered as an infraction of that principle and an obserce offered to the nation beneath whose protection they were going.

It may, perhaps, be objected to us that those two persons were not ordinary citizens, since they carried a commission bestile to the government by whose cruiser they were taken. There is only one exception to the rule proviously established—contraband of war; but the things which constitute it are clearly pointed out is international law, and are of such a nature that they cannot be taken on board a neutral vessel without the captain knowing they are contraband, and consenting, contrary to the obligations which neutrality impose upon him—becoming thus, through himself, responsible for the consequences. But how could the commanier of the Trent ascertain whether Nesser, Mason and Sildeli were two private gentlemen, who, with their wives and daughters, were going to Europe, like the reat of the passengers, or two commissioners from the 8 attent coafederacy, holding an office hostile to the federal government? In on manner. It would be absure on the face of it to qualify them as contraband of war.

aducated in the principles of the old English school, who may, being badly understood and applied, be made to serve as a support to the doctrine opposed to that which we sustain. He says:—"The carrying, for the service of the enemy, of military persons or despatches, is an act of the same nature as contraband of war. A neutral vessel which is supplyed in carrying hostile forces is subject to confiscation if captured by the opposing belligerent. The being obliged to do it by force would not excuse, because a similar excuse would noutralize the profibition of carrying contraband of war or the participation in whatever other heatile act. In regard to the number of military individuals which would justify an infraction, no rule can be established, inasmich as a small number of persons of high position and consideration may be of greater importance than a greater number of inferior condition." Sec.

tir us have adomnly declared that they consider and respect them of a be disperent Power, they colory, with the governments that have so declared, in everything appertations to the war they are setting, the same considerations and prerogatives which, in its beligerent character, are due to the folieral Union.

Wo will conclude this already too lengthy article by saying lastly, that modern interprational hav, more liberal, ampier and incre favorable to commerce than the old, recognizes as a principe that the flag covers the merchandise, and, with greater reason, persons; that the circumstance of these being commissioned by one of the belligerent flowers, or being bearers of despaticles to one or more neutral nations, does not impose on the latter the obligation of refusing them passage in one of their vesses, or through their territory, through a necessity to preserve international relations; that by granting such they do not, therefore, perform a hostile act similar to the transportation of soldiers occurred and of war, and that from all these reasons, and those previously stated, it may be clearly clouded, in our ophing, that the American cruiser San Jaconto, in having stopped the steamer Trent, taken from her and carried away by force two of her passengers, violated the principe or neutrality, which is what we have proposed to demonstrate in this and the former article.

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM PENSACOLA.

REPORTED FIGHT BETWEEN UNION AND REBEL GUNBOATS. Cateago, Pec. 7, 1861.

PRISACOLA, Dec. 4, 1861. The steamships Florida and Pamiico engaged the federal fleet, off the cast end of Hern Island, at nine o'clock to day. The federal forces retired.

THE BESIEGEMENT OF FORT PULASKI.

1 strations of the war by giving a map, topographical and hydrographical, of Fort Polaski and its surroundlags. This district will now attract general interest from the fact that a despatch from Sav a nah in the Richmon papers of the 5th, dated 4th instant, mayn: __'Sixteen of the ships of the enemy (Union) are now inside the bar, and an attack on Fort Pulaski is hourly expected." From another rebel source it alleges that the federals have evacuated Tybee Island, and that the lighthouse has been borned by their troops. The latter despatch has no foundation in fact, as no attempt had been made by our trops at that date to occupy the island in force. It is true that several reconnoitring parties had whited the island, with a view to its diffinate possession and the besiege-ment of Fort Polaski. These reconnoiseances have been full and satisfactory, and no doubt ere this the island is occupied in force by our troops. In the mountime the island is held at all points by our naval fleet, their presence rendering it untenable by the rebels. In the de-spatch from Savannah aliaded to in this letter there is a abability of truth, from the fact that it corroborates the prognostications of our correspondents, who receive information from authentic sources, that the be-Dupont is an officer who keeps his own counsel. At the the 3d inst., the following naval vessels were at Fort

> Friente Wabash (flagship). GUNBOATS.
>
> R. B. Forbes,
> Isaac Smith,
> Moreury,
> O. M. Pettit,
> Penguin,
> Augusta,
> Florida,
> Bienville. OFF PORT ROYAL BAR.

Gunboats De Soto and I. Smith. OFF TYBEE ISLAND.

Frigate Savannah, Gunboat Flag,
Gunboat Seneca.
These vessels all belong to Commodore Dupont's fleet; These versess an obtain the common and as the distance between Port Royal and Tybes Island and Fort Pulaski is less than twenty miles, it gives color to the rebel despatch from Savannah of the 4th inst., that Fort Pulaski was then about being bombarded, unless the "sixteen vessels" seen inside the bar were a portion of the "stone feet," If Pulaski is to be bombarded or besieged, it would not be with a view of the reduction of that work by our naval force alone, but merely to cover the army operations in the erection of strong batteries on the adjacent points of land or islands within range of the rebel fort. Our illustration to day embraces all the tangible points for the eraction of batteries, viz:-On Tybee, Jones, Turtle and Long Islands. The circle around the fort shows the points at a distance of two and a half miles from Fort Pulnski, being that of about the maximum range of the heavy smooth bore guns on our war and naval rifled siege cannon now at Hilton Head, ready for immediate transportation to the points above named. The possession of Fort Pulaski by our troops would seem in dispensable to us at this conjuncture. It would give us full command of Savannah by the river and Warsaw Sound, at once establishing us in the blockade of these points, and entirely relieving the large naval force now employed there. The robel works on Tybes Island, a plan of which is shown in our illustration, will no doubt be mounted with a heavy battery of gans, which will play an important part in the re-notion of Pelacki.